



## Get Ready for Flu Season!

### Frequently Asked Questions for Vermont State Retirees

### ***Vermont State Employees' Flu Vaccination Clinics***

#### **Who can come to the Vermont state employee flu clinics?**

State retirees, actives, and temporary state employees, regardless of insurance coverage, are eligible. **Non-state retirees/employees are not eligible for vaccinations at these clinic sites.** Additionally, there is no co-pay and no out-of-pocket cost to participants for the vaccination. **If you are not eligible for a State Employee Flu Shot**, you can find other flu clinics through your local newspaper or at: [http://www.healthvermont.gov/prevent/flu/flu\\_clinics.aspx](http://www.healthvermont.gov/prevent/flu/flu_clinics.aspx).

#### **When and how do I register?**

Starting September 14, register online at: <http://vt.healthyachievers.com>. Register up to 24 hours before the scheduled clinic. (Registration for Monday clinics will close the prior Thursday.) Appointment slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. **No computer access?** Call 1-800-371-8384 Monday-Friday 9AM-6PM. *Healthy Achievers* is our vendor. Ask to register for a **"State of VT Flu Shot"**. Otherwise, leave a message and your call will be returned.

#### **Will you accept walk ins?**

Yes, but **scheduled appointments will have priority**. We cannot guarantee that there will be time or vaccine available for walk-ins on any given day. If you choose to walk in, there may be a long wait time or you may be asked to come back at another time. Walk-ins must have proof of state retirement/employment for eligibility (pension statement, check stub, state ID). If insured through Medicare or CIGNA, you must have your card as well.

#### **What should I bring to the flu clinic?**

Please bring a completed signed copy of the flu release form, your CIGNA and/or Medicare card (if applicable) and proof of state employment/retirement, such as pension statement, pay stub or state ID card (active). Also remember to wear a short sleeved shirt so that the nurse will have easy access to your arm.

#### **Why should I get a flu shot?**

Each year over 36,000 people in the U.S. die and over 200,000 people are hospitalized from complications of seasonal flu. The risk of serious complications is especially pronounced for the elderly or those with compromised immune systems. The CDC recommends that all individuals over the age of 50 receive a flu shot. The flu shot is 70-90% effective in preventing the flu and spreading the virus to others. Receiving the shot increases the chance that you will stay healthy, lose fewer days of work, and enjoy more days of play. If you get vaccinated and contract the flu, your case will be milder than in an unvaccinated person.

#### **Will I get sick from the flu shot?**

**No, the flu vaccine is made from dead (non- active) flu virus and will not cause the flu.** Side effects are possible, although the majority of people who receive a flu shot have no serious problems from it. Some common side effects are: soreness and/or swelling at the injection site, fever, fatigue, muscle aches, sore throat or cough. These minor side effects can last for 1 or 2 days.

On rare occasions, flu shots can cause serious problems such as severe allergic reaction usually within a few minutes to a few hours. Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness. If symptoms occur, call 911/seek immediate medical attention and contact your primary care provider.

#### **Will the seasonal flu vaccine protect me against H1N1 (formerly known as the "swine flu")?**

No. National health officials are researching the need for a separate H1N1 flu vaccine. The Wellness Program will not be administering H1N1 vaccines. Any local vaccinations will be coordinated through the VT Department of Health. Visit their website at: <http://healthvermont.gov/panflu/SwineFlu.aspx>. It will be very important for the public to follow upcoming health care advice on the H1N1, as this virus may cause more illness or more severe illness than usual. To learn more about novel H1N1, visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.

**Need more answers/forms/information?** Contact the Vermont State Employees' Wellness Program us at 802-241-1535 or through email at [DHR-EmpWellness@state.vt.us](mailto:DHR-EmpWellness@state.vt.us). Visit us at: <http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/wellness.php>. To learn more about flu, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.